Handing over of Sikh Hijackers to India by Pakistan

6194. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had requested the Pakistani authorities to hand over to India five Sikh hijackers of an Indian Airlines Airbus on a Srinagar-Delhi flight in 1984;

(b) if so, what has been the Pak Government's response thereto; and

(c) whether they have served their sentence in Pakistan and released?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government of Pakistan has declined to return the hijackers on various pretexts and they were reportedly tried by Pakistani courts and sentenced.

(c) Government have seen Pakistani press reports about the hijackers having been since pardoned or released on bail. We sought clarification from the Government of Pakistan regarding these press reports. However, despite several reminders, Pakistan has not given any response.

Extradition of LTTE Chief

6195. SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the reported statement of Mr. Prabhakaran, the LTTE Chief, virtually owning and rather claiming responsibility for the murder of the former Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv Gandhi;

(b) if so, what steps have been taken to secure extradition of Shri Prabhakaran and other accomplices for prosecuting them under the Indian law; and

(c) what steps, if any, have been taken by Government to mobilise world opinion against LTTE to have it declared as an International Terrorist outfit?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Government has seen a statement reported in Sri Lankan newspapers in February 1995 attributed to LTTE spokesman, Anton Balasingham, which indirectly arrogates to the LTTE the responsibility for the assassination of the former Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv Gandhi.

(b) Government of India has taken steps to comply with the requirements of Indian Law relating to the arrest of Prabhakaran. The designated Court in Madras, where the trial of the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case is in progress, had issued warrants of arrest and proclamantions against V. Prabhakaran under Section 8(3)(A) of TADA, With the assistance of the Government of Sri Lanka these were got published in leading newspapers of Sri Lanka in 1992. According to the proclamations, V. Prabhakaran was directed to appear before the designated Court on or before 28.2.1992. This deadline having passed without the accused appearing before the Court, further legal action into the case has been under progress. On 20 May, 1992 the Special Investigation Team (SIT) filed the chargesheet against V. Prabhakaran, prime accused, in the designated court in Madras. In April 1994 a Red Corner notice requesting the arrest of V. Prabhakaran was circulated through Interpol. All relevant aspects of seeking extradition of Shri Prabhakaran and other accomplices remain under consideration of the relevant agencies of the Government of India.

(c) The LTTE was declared an unlawful association under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act of 1967 on 14th May 1992. A further notification declaring the LTTE an unlawful association was published in the Gazette of India in May 1994 extending the earlier ban on the LTTE by another two years. The notifications were got

published in newspapers in London and Colombo.

Visit of Russian Prime Minister to India

6196. SHRI RAJ NATH SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Russian Prime Minister and his team visited India recently;

(b) if so, the details of the main aims and objectives behind the visit and the details of issues discussed with the President of India and other Indian leaders;

(c) the outcome of the discussions held, alongwith the details of the trade agreement/MOU signed with the Government of India during his visit; and

(d) what are the main features of the agreement and trade treaties signed with Russia and the terms of export and import between the two countries?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) (a) Yes, Sir. Russian Prime Minister Mr. V.S. Chernomyrdin, accompanied by a high-power delegation visited India on December 23 & 24, 1994.

(b) and (c) Prime Minister Chernomyrdin's visit was the first by a Russian Prime Minister to India. It provided an opportunity to review the progress which had been made in bilateral relations with Russia particularly since Prime Minister's visit to Moscow in June-July 1994. Prime Minister Chernomyrdin called on President and Vice-President; had a one-to-one meeting with Prime Minister; led his delegation for delegation-level talks and addressed a press conference.

In his various meetings Prime Minister Chernomyrdin reiterated Russia's support for India's candidature for a permanent seat on the UN security Council. He stated that Russia was against the internationalisation of the Jammu & Kashmir issue and would like to see it resolved through bilateral dialogue on the basis of the Simla Agreement. At a press conference, he said that Russia was not supplying arms to Pakistan and would not do so in future. A decision was also taken to establish a hot-line between Delhi and Moscow.

During the visit, 8 documents were signed in the fields of promotion and mutual protection of investments; long-term Russian purchases of certain commodities in India; Merchant Shipping; long-term programme of military and technical cooperation upto the year 2000; cooperation in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes; broadening the scope of Indo-Russian Joint Commission; multi-entry visas for diplomatic and official passport holders; and cooperation in the field of information.

(d) Agreement in the fields of promotion and mutual proection of investments; long-term Russian purchases of certain commodities in India; and Merchant Shipping directly relate to the measures aimed at promoting and further strengthening Indo-Russian trade and economic relations. Currently Indo-Russian bilateral trade is carried out through hard-currency payments, debt-repayment route and the counter-context trade mechanism. The terms of bilateral trade are subject purely to the market forces.

ICJ Report on Indo-Pak Dispute

6197. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have seen the report of the International Commission of Jurists on the Kashmir problem stating that the Shimla Agreement was normally binding on Pakistan and deprived Islamabad of its locus standi to intervene in the issue, as reported in the 'Times of India' dated the 23rd March, 1995;